1: Allen H-4 (no date) 1932 R11 Georgia R11

[Medieval Georgia]

771 revered and neglected by their sanctimonious successors. The priest-mind took the rough clean spirit of the Founder and the rugged sacrifices of these old and dim-remembered men who found in it a divine message for humanity; and violent and abortive, cunning and obsequious, the priest-mind turned it into the sour wine of the Mediæval church.

●794 It is difficult to appreciate the extent to which the Church checked the development of human knowledge during the Middle Ages. Education was the preserve of the Church in Georgia, as in other countries of the Christian East and West. The wealth and the intellectual monopoly of the Church attracted to it much of the best human material of each successive century. This material was physically sterilized in the monasteries and mentally sterilized in the copying and illumination of sacred books and in the development of bleak theses upon futile religious controversies. Georgian ecclesiastical literature produced nothing of intellectual value with the exception of certain parts of the Annals and some historical manuscripts, and through the pages of these works there runs the endless thread of priestly perversion of the truth to suit the moral reclamations—or more frequently the purely material designs on property—of the Church. It was left to the wild growth of the troubadour literature—evolved under the free-thinking influence of the Persian poets and the Classic philosophers—to express the natural art and creative genius of the Georgian spirit.

795 659 The Georgian Church remained always in close alliance with the Greek. At an early period Greek ecclesiasts were active in Georgia, and Georgian monks were numerous in Syria and Greece. The Georgian Church was originally subordinate to the Patriarchs of Antioch, but the Armenian Church exercised a closer influence on Georgian ritual and dogma, until, in the second half of the fifth century, the decisions of the Council of Chalchedon produced the Schism which led to the separation of the Armenian from the Greek Church. Thenceforward the Georgians, following in the train of Greek religious thought, carried on a long and often politically disastrous feud with the Armenians, although both David the Restorer and Tamara called Councils in an attempt to reconcile the dogmatic scruples of the contending priests. At the same time the Churches of Byzantium and Georgia were closely associated. The Byzantine Emperors endowed churches in Georgia, and made donations for the restoration of others

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seizure (*akho*). New clearings were forbidden by the government and, if made, were done so only by special permission of the authorities.

Most forests were the property of the Church. Almost every investigator or mere traveler who has visited the country of the Georgian Highlanders describes the rich virgin forests belonging to the Church. We have already mentioned such forests in Svanetia,[21] as described by Bartolomei[22] and Bakradze.[23] The same situation was found among the Khevsurs. The forests representing Church property are called by the Khevsurs, Pshavs and Tushes, *sakhato* forests, and they are usually situated around the sanctuaries or not far from them. Such forests are very easily recognized by their large old trees. No one is permitted to approach these trees or to break off their branches.

Besides the forests, the Church property consists of arable land, vineyards, flocks of sheep, and church utensils and vessels.

All members of every community are members of the local sanctuary, the arable land, and pasture grounds (*sakhato mitsebi,* of property." The property of the sanctuary (*khati*) is called *sakhato,* and consists of different buildings representing the sanctuary, the arable land, and pasture grounds (*sakhato mitsebi,* meaning "church lands"). Besides the above-mentioned property of the *khati,* there are also silver and copper vessels and utensils necessary in the brewing of beer, called *ludi,* and for church festivals. All the property of the *khati* is regarded as common property of all the *mogantzuri.* The supervision and care of the church property is entrusted to the attendants of the sanctuary—*dekanozi, khutsi, dasturi,* and others.

Almost every sanctuary in Khevsuria and Pshavia possessed large copper pots, valued at from one hundred to two hundred rubles, and used for brewing beer from barley.[24] Some sanctuaries possessed silver vessels of different form and size, with the names of the donors inscribed on them, and worth from one to

[21] See Chapter III.
[22] Bartolomei: 151-3.
[23] Bakradze: 51.
[24] Eristov: 99.

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twenty thousand rubles. Dr. Radde (1878) relates that he found silver vessels in a sanctuary in Khevsuria valued at fifteen hundred rubles. "Diese gefaesse bilden den hauptsaechlichsten Reichtum des heidnischen Tempels. Im vorliegenden Falle konnte ich sie wohl auf einen Worth von 1500 Rubel schaetzen."[25] Concerning the Pshav sanctuary *Lashris jvari*, Klaproth writes (1808):[26] "It is said to contain many golden images of saints, crosses and church utensils, for to this place the Pshavs and Tushes bring all the gold and silver that fall into their hands." All this wealth is in the custody of the *dekanozi*, who preserve them in well-hidden pits. About the same sanctuary Prince Vakhusht writes (1789):[27] "In Pshavia is a church erected by Kink Lasha, where there are preserved a great number of gold and silver icons (holy images), crosses, vessels and books. They call this church *Lashris-jvari*, and hold it in great veneration. There is not one Pshav or Khevsur who will keep gold and silver for himself; he has no right to it, but must present it to the church of *Lashris-jvari*."

Besides the above-named vessels and utensils, the sanctuaries also possessed vineyards,[28] which were situated in the Georgian province of Kakhethi, famous for its excellent varieties of wine. The wine from these vineyards, called *kulukhi*, is used for the church festivals, where enormous quantities of beer and wine are consumed by the thirsty throats of the mountaineers. These drinking orgies always end in fighting and brawling.

The purchase of a vineyard or other necessary properties for the sanctuary was made in the following manner: the *khevis-beri* of one of the sanctuaries called the people together on the meeting grounds and announced his wish to them concerning the purchase of a vineyard or some other property for the sanctuary, and asked them to make the assessments of money among themselves for this purpose. The necessary funds were contributed promptly and willingly by the community and given to *khevis-beri*, who arranged the purchase.

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[25] Radde: c, 259.
[26] Klaproth: a, 396.
[27] Vakhusht: 109-10.
[28] Zisserman: 233; Eristov: 99, 108.

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The barley for the preparation of the beer is brought by all members of the community where the sanctuary is situated, and is kept in stock in a special building of the sanctuary called *begeli*. And for numerous sacrifices brought during Church festivals, the sanctuary of *Thamar-mepe* even possesses a large flock of sheep, the shepherds of whom are appointed from the members of the congregation, for a period of one year, and are subject to many taboos and regulations, which they must obey during that period.

Any violation of group or private property is regarded as a crime, and in its prosecution the principal matter is the restitution of material damage.